

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 have been examined. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,969,736 to Field et al. (hereinafter "Field"). Claims 3-24, however, are objected to but would be allowable if rewritten into independent form (*see* Office Action: page 3).

As an initial matter, the subject matter of claim 2 and the allowable subject matter of claim 3 are incorporated into claim 1. Accordingly, claims 2 and 3 are canceled to avoid redundancy. Additionally, claim 4 is amended to correct its dependency.

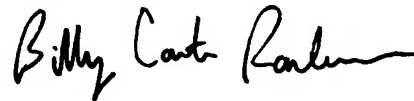
Since claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of claim 2 and the allowable subject matter of claim 3, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is not anticipated by Field.

Furthermore, these amendments place claims 4-24 in condition for immediate allowance, as they no longer depend from a rejected base claim.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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